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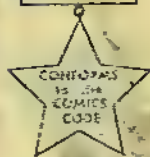
COMIC

Avon

COW

AUTHORIZED
A. C. M. P.

No. 7



10¢

PUNCHER



10¢



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

KIT WEST

**"BEWARE
AFTER
DARK"**



IT WAS BAD ENOUGH TO TAKE A WAGON TRAIN THROUGH DANGER - FRAUGHT INDIAN TERRITORY, AND IT WAS WORSE TO BE LEADING PEOPLE WHO REFUSED TO BELIEVE IN THE DANGER UNTIL FAMED SCOUT, KIT WEST TOOK MATTERS INTO HER OWN HANDS IN...**"BEWARE AFTER DARK!"**

A GREAT WAGON TRAIN PREPARES TO ROLL FILLED WITH PIONEERS EAGER TO OPEN THE WEST.

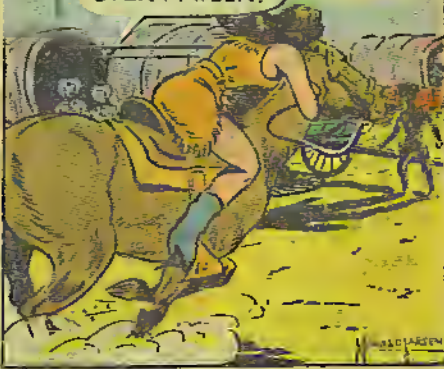
ALL IS READY, BUT WHERE IS THE SCOUT? WITHOUT HIM WE CAN NOT MOVE. HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE YESTERDAY!

BAH! THESE SCOUTS ARE NOTHING BUT IRRESPONSIBLE RUFFIANS...**LOOK,** PERHAPS THIS IS HE NOW!



EGAD! 'TIS A WOMAN! SHE MUST BRING A MESSAGE FROM MIM!

I HOPE NOTHING IS WRONG. WE CAN'T DELAY MUCH LONGER. EVERYONE HAS BEEN PACKED FOR OVER A WEEK!





HAVE YOU NEWS FOR US, GIRL? WE AWAIT THE SCOUT WHO IS TO TAKE US TO KENTUCKY!

HAS HE BEEN HURT? IS HE DELAYED?

HE IS NEITHER HURT NOR DELAYED. SHE IS HERE! GENTLEMEN, I AM THE SCOUT!



HA HA HA! YOU JEST! COME NOW, A GIRL SCOUT! HO HO!

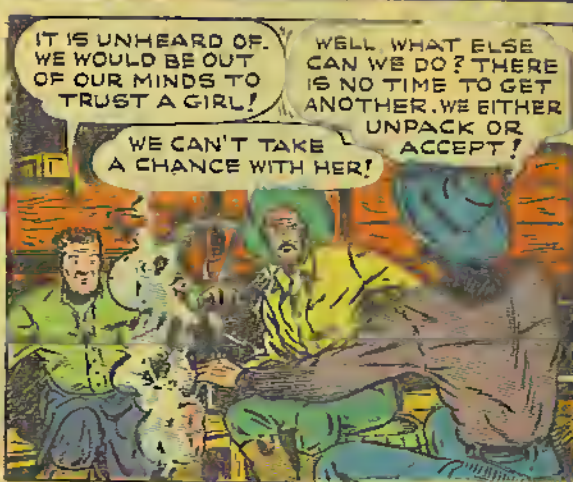
WE ARE NOT GOING ON A TEA PARTY. WE GO TO SETTLE THE LAND!

SPEAK UP! WHERE IS OUR SCOUT?



I AM KIT WEST, THE SCOUT YOU SENT FOR. I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS THESE TRAILS. IF YOU WISH TO GO, YOU GO WITH ME!

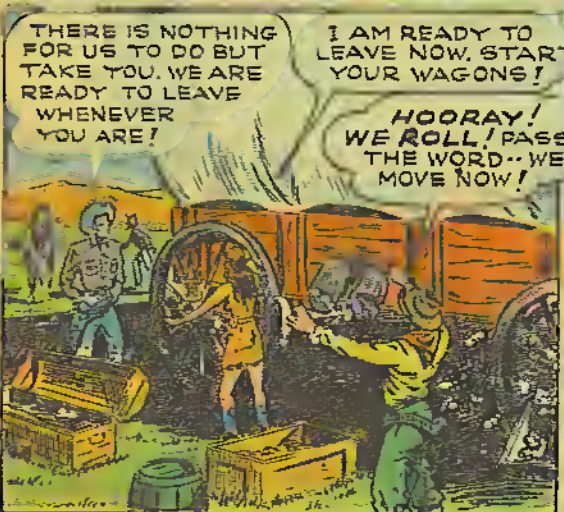
JUST A MINUTE. I WILL SPEAK WITH THE OTHERS!



IT IS UNHEARD OF. WE WOULD BE OUT OF OUR MINDS TO TRUST A GIRL!

WELL, WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO? THERE IS NO TIME TO GET ANOTHER. WE EITHER UNPACK OR ACCEPT!

WE CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE WITH HER!



THERE IS NOTHING FOR US TO DO BUT TAKE YOU. WE ARE READY TO LEAVE WHENEVER YOU ARE!

I AM READY TO LEAVE NOW. START YOUR WAGONS!

HOORAY! WE ROLL! PASS THE WORD--WE MOVE NOW!



HALLOOO! MR. GREY, STOP!

WHOOO, BOY! IS ANYTHING WRONG?

DON'T YOU KNOW BETTER, DASHING OFF IN HOSTILE INDIAN TERRITORY? YOU MIGHT BE CUT DOWN BEFORE YOU WERE A HALF MILE AWAY!

COME NOW, I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. YOU JUST SHOW US THE WAY!

YOU SURE LOOK PRETTY WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY. WHY DON'T YOU STICK TO BEING A GIRL FOR AWHILE AND LEAVE MEN'S JOBS TO MEN!

I KNOW ONE THING, I'M LEAVING YOU, MR. GREY. YOU CAN GO AHEAD AND GET SCALPED!

FOOLS AND IDIOTS, THAT'S ALL THEY ARE! THEY DESERVE TO BE MASSACRED!

GOT TO HAND IT TO HER, SHE SURE IS A SPUNKY GAL. STILL CAN'T SEE HER AS A SCOUT THOUGH!

AND AT NIGHT ON THE OPEN TRAIL...

I THINK WE'D BETTER HALT HERE FOR THE NIGHT. IT'S A GOOD SPOT. NO CHANCE OF BEING SURROUNDED! FORM YOU WAGONS INTO A CIRCLE!

REALLY, KIT, AREN'T YOU OVERDOING THIS INDIAN STUFF? WE'RE TOO TIRED TO DO THAT!

HOW DID THEY EVER PICK YOU TO LEAD THIS WAGON TRAIN? YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A CITY BRED FOOL! THE INDIANS ARE JUST WAITING FOR A CHANCE LIKE THIS!

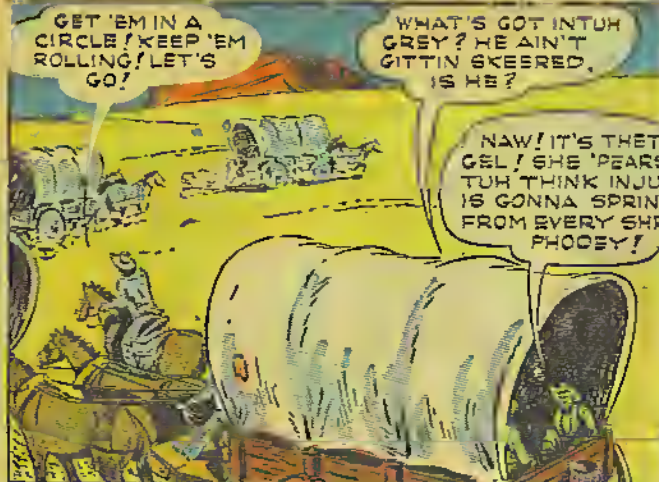
BAH! THEY WOULDN'T DARE ATTACK US. WE'RE TOO STRONG!

HE'S RIGHT. YOU WOMEN ARE SUCH FUSSBUDGETS. WHY DON'T YOU RELAX A LITTLE?

AND SO IT GOES DAY AFTER DAY UNTIL...

THIS TRAIL HAS BEEN FRESHLY TRAVELED BY INDIANS! CALL A HALT IN THE OPEN AREA... AND PLEASE FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS!

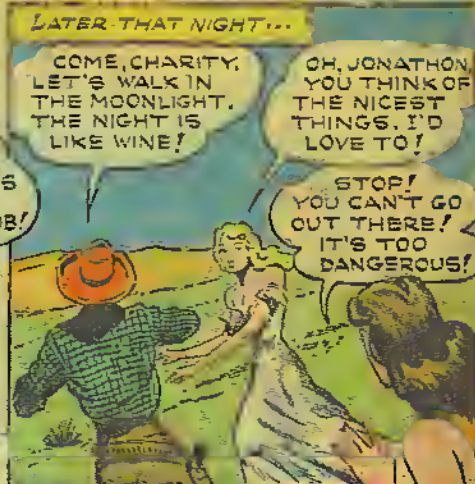
ALRIGHT, IF YOU'RE THAT WORRIED. PROBABLY JUST ANOTHER FALSE ALARM, BUT WE'LL DO IT!



GET 'EM IN A
CIRCLE! KEEP 'EM
ROLLING! LET'S
GO!

WHAT'S GOT INTO
GREY? HE AIN'T
GITTIN' SKEERED,
IS HE?

NOW! IT'S THE
GEL! SHE 'PEARS
TUH THINK INJUNS
IS GONNA SPRING
FROM EVERY SHRUB!
PHOOEY!

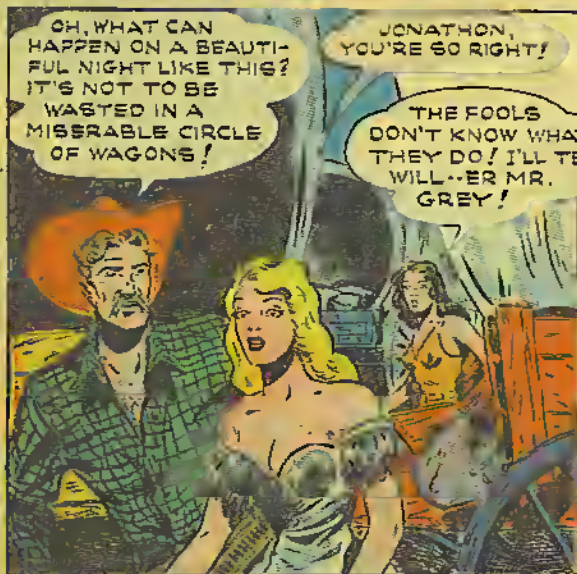


LATER THAT NIGHT...

COME, CHARITY,
LET'S WALK IN
THE MOONLIGHT.
THE NIGHT IS
LIKE WINE!

OH, JONATHAN,
YOU THINK OF
THE NICEST
THINGS. I'D
LOVE TO!

STOP!
YOU CAN'T GO
OUT THERE!
IT'S TOO
DANGEROUS!



OH, WHAT CAN
HAPPEN ON A BEAUTI-
FUL NIGHT LIKE THIS?
IT'S NOT TO BE
WASTED IN A
MISERABLE CIRCLE
OF WAGONS!

JONATHAN,
YOU'RE SO RIGHT!

THE FOOLS
DON'T KNOW WHAT
THEY DO! I'LL TELL
WILL--ER MR.
GREY!



MOMENTS LATER...

MR. GREY, WHY
AREN'T GENTRIES
POSTED? TWO OF
YOUR PEOPLE LEFT
CAMP!

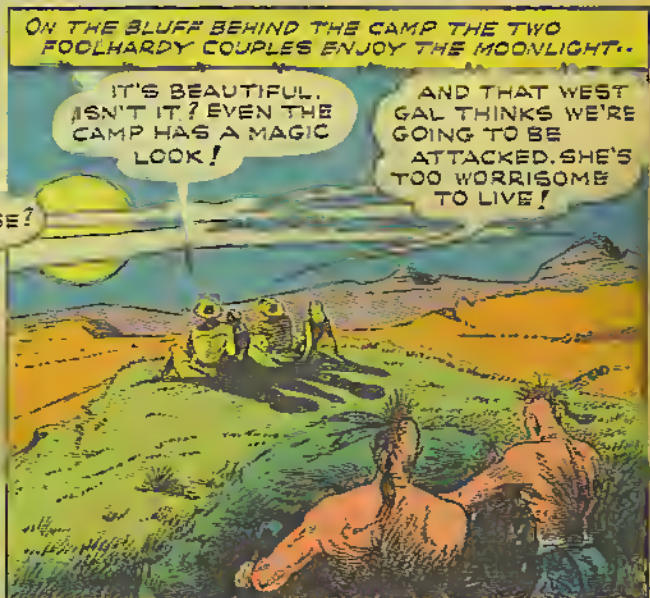
WHO CAN BLAME
THEM ON A NIGHT
LIKE THIS? THEY
WILL BE BACK...
YOU KNOW, I THINK
YOU NEED A LITTLE
MOONLIGHT
YOURSELF!



I'LL GIVE YOU A
LITTLE IDEA OF WHAT
TO DO... PRISCILLA,
WILL YOU WALK WITH
ME ON THE
PRAIRIE?

WHY--WHY--
WILL! OF
COURSE!

OHKK! HOW
DID I EVER GET
MIXED UP WITH
FOOLS LIKE THESE?
THEY'RE NOT
PIONEERS!



ON THE BLUFF BEHIND THE CAMP THE TWO
FOOLHARDY COUPLES ENJOY THE MOONLIGHT..

IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
ISN'T IT? EVEN THE
CAMP HAS A MAGIC
LOOK!

AND THAT WEST
GAL THINKS WE'RE
GOING TO BE
ATTACKED. SHE'S
TOO WORRISOME
TO LIVE!



UGH! CHIEF GIVE
BIG REWARD WHEN
BRING BACK TO
TRIBE!

UGH!

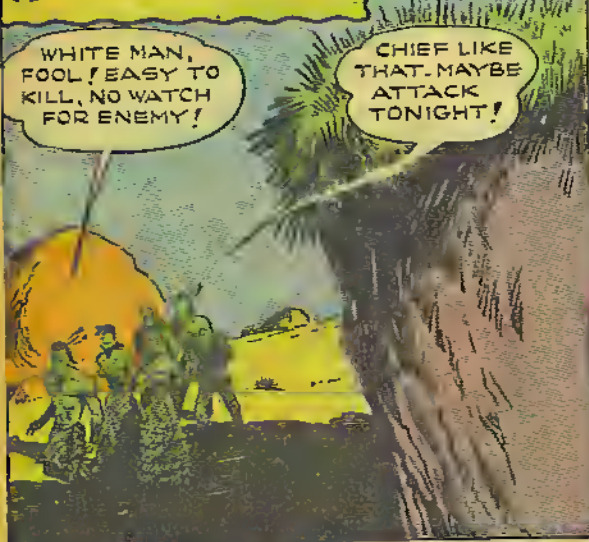
MAKE BIG
CEREMONY!
MEDICINE MAN
LIKE TOO!



WHITE GIRL
VERY PRETTY.
MAKE GOOD
BURNING
MATERIAL!

UGH! HAVE LONG
HAIR, MAKE FINE
SCALP. ME GO
FOR DARK ONE!

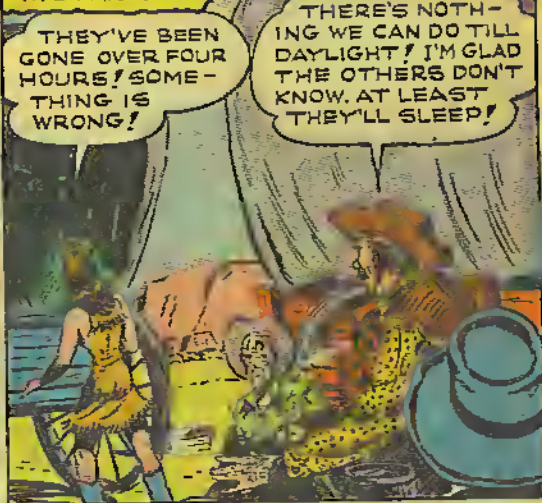
A FEW MINUTES LATER...



WHITE MAN,
FOOL! EASY TO
KILL, NO WATCH
FOR ENEMY!

CHIEF LIKE
THAT. MAYBE
ATTACK
TONIGHT!

BACK AT CAMP, KIT AND AN UNEASY
GROUP OF PIONEERS AWAIT THE MISS-
ING PARTY...



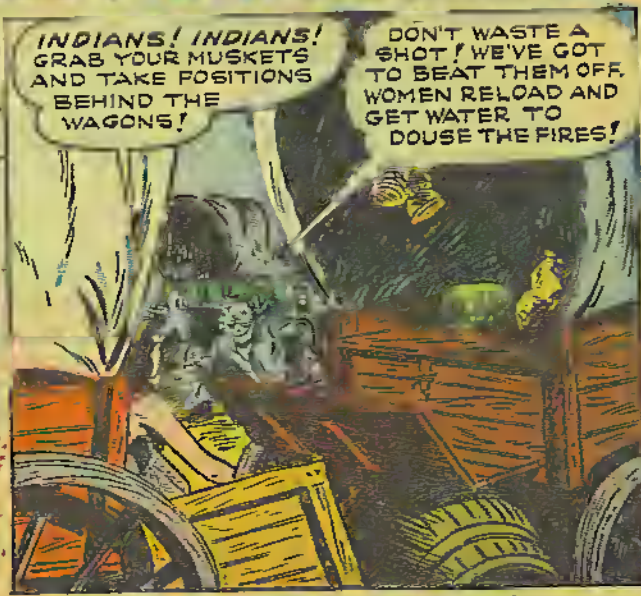
THEY'VE BEEN
GONE OVER FOUR
HOURS! SOME-
THING IS
WRONG!

THERE'S NOTH-
ING WE CAN DO TILL
DAYLIGHT! I'M GLAD
THE OTHERS DON'T
KNOW. AT LEAST
THEY'LL SLEEP!



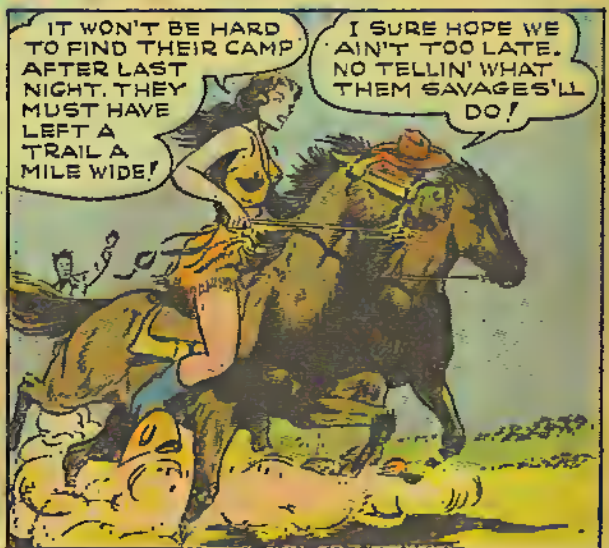
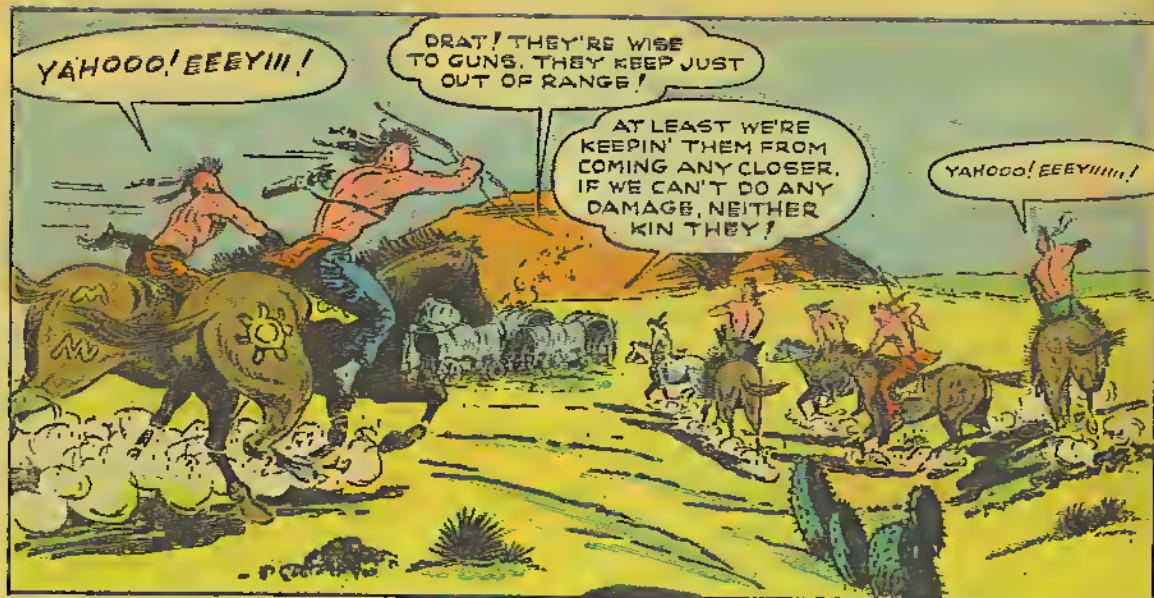
PROBABLY
LOST THEIR WAY.
COULDN'T BE
INDIANS OR WE'D
HAVE--YEEOW!

IT'S AN ATTACK!
ROUSE THE
OTHERS QUICK!
WE'RE SURROUNDED.
THEY'RE GOING
TO BURN US OUT!



INDIANS! INDIANS!
GRAB YOUR MUSKETS
AND TAKE POSITIONS
BEHIND THE
WAGONS!

DON'T WASTE A
SHOT! WE'VE GOT
TO BEAT THEM OFF.
WOMEN RELOAD AND
GET WATER TO
DOUSE THE FIRES!



SEVERAL HOURS LATER ON A RISE THAT OVERLOOKS THE INDIAN CAMP...

LISTEN TO THAT HOOTING AND HOLLERING. THEY MUST BE GETTING READY TO SACRIFICE THE PRISONERS!

BY HECK, THEY AIN'T GONNA TOUCH 'EM EFN I KIN HELP IT! KIN WE SEE FROM HERE?



TOO WELL, I'M AFRAID. THEY'RE GOING TO BURN THEM AT THE STAKE. WE'VE GOT TO SAVE THEM!

YA SPEAKIN' WORDS, MISS KIT, BUT I DON'T SEE HOW WE'RE GONNA DO IT WITHOUT GETTIN' KILT OURSELVES!



I'VE GOT IT! THOSE INDIANS ARE STILL GUN SHY! JOE, GIVE ME YOUR POWDER HORN!

HERE YE ARE. WHUT IN TARNATION YE GOT UP YE SLEEVE NOW? AIN'T ENOUGH POWDER HERE TO BLOW UP A TEPEE!



THERE'S ENOUGH HERE FOR WHAT I HAVE IN MIND. LUCKY YOU HAD THIS TOBACCO POUCH WITH YOU!

WELL, I HOPE IT'S ALL RIGHT, WHUT-EVER IT IS. IF IT AIN'T, WE'RE GONNA HAVE A MIGHTY HOT TIME!



WHILE IN THE INDIAN CAMP...

OH WILL, I'M-- I'M FRIGHTENED!

DON'T LET THEM SEE IT. THEY'LL ONLY TORTURE YOU MORE. WHY... WHY DIDN'T I LISTEN TO KIT?



I--I CAN'T STAND THIS ANYMORE. I--I GOING TO SCREAM!

HO! MUCH GOOD SPORT! ME COME CLOSEST TO WOMAN! ME WIN SCALP!

I GOT YOU INTO THIS WITH MY STUPID STUBBORNNESS! WHY DON'T THEY KILL ME?







THE OMEN IS HERE, OH CHIEF. THE FIRE GOD WILL SPEAK FOR HIMSELF! ARISE, OH LORD OF THE FIRE AND LET US SEE YOUR MIGHT!



AIEE! HE SPEAKS! HE IS DISPLEASED!

HE WILL BURN US TO DEATH! WE ARE DOOMED!



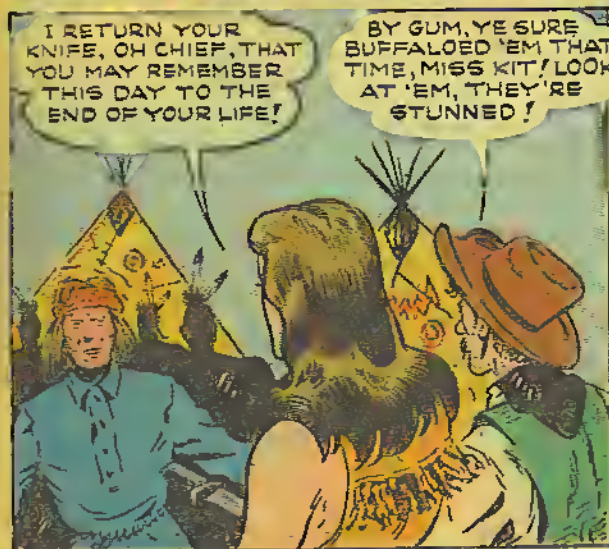
HE HAS SPOKEN, OH CHIEF. NOW I WILL FREE THE PRISONERS BEFORE HE SHOWS HIS DISPLEASURE AGAIN!

TAKE THEM AND GO! QUICKLY!



KIT...HOW CAN I EVER---

THERE IS NO TIME FOR TALK NOW! WE MUST LEAVE BEFORE THEY GET OVER THEIR SURPRISE!



I RETURN YOUR KNIFE, OH CHIEF, THAT YOU MAY REMEMBER THIS DAY TO THE END OF YOUR LIFE!

BY GUM, YE SURE BUFFALOED 'EM THAT TIME, MISS KIT! LOOK AT 'EM, THEY'RE STUNNED!



AFTER AN EXHAUSTING JOURNEY THEY REACH THE WAGON TRAIN...

KIT, I--I'VE BEEN A BLIND IDIOT AND A STUBBORN ONE. CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?

OF COURSE I DO. I GUESS YOU'VE ALL LEARNED YOUR LESSON. INDIAN TERRITORY ISN'T LIKE CITY LIFE!



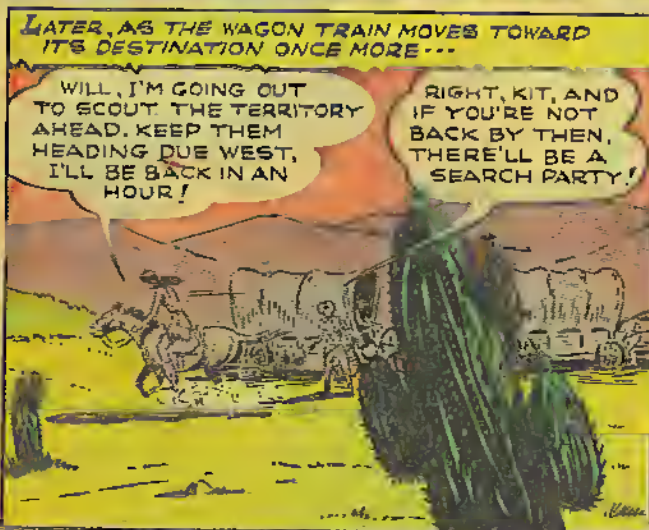
WILL YOU... THAT IS--
ER WOULD YOU WALK
WITH ME SOME NIGHT?
I--I HAVE SOME-
THING TO TELL
YOU!

OF COURSE,
WILL--AS LONG
AS WE STAY IN-
SIDE THE CIRCLE!



BY GUM LET'S
GIVE THREE CHEERS
FOR KIT WEST! SHE
SAVED US ALL!

YE DERNED
TOOTIN', SHE DID.
THAT GAL KNOWS
HER BUSINESS!



LATER, AS THE WAGON TRAIN MOVES TOWARD
IT'S DESTINATION ONCE MORE---

WILL, I'M GOING OUT
TO SCOUT THE TERRITORY
AHEAD. KEEP THEM
HEADING DUE WEST,
I'LL BE BACK IN AN
HOUR!

RIGHT, KIT, AND
IF YOU'RE NOT
BACK BY THEN,
THERE'LL BE A
SEARCH PARTY!



THEN, OUT ON THE TRAIL---

NOW, KIT WEST,
YOU KEEP APPOINT-
MENT. ME GLAD
TO SEE!

I'M GLAD TO
SEE YOU TOO,
CHIEF. YOU
PUT ON A GOOD
SHOW. ALMOST
TOO GOOD!



HO! ME NOT HAVE SO
MUCH FUN SINCE LAST
WAR WITH IROGOIS!
HOPE WHITE MEN
LEARN GOOD LESSON!

THEY SURE HAVE,
CHIEF. YOU AND YOUR
PEOPLE HAVE ALL MY
THANKS. NOW THEY
WILL BE PREPARED FOR
THE HOSTILE TRIBES
AHEAD. I MUST GO NOW!



YOU CALL ANY-
TIME YOU NEED
HELP, KIT WEST!
GOODBYE!

THANKS, CHIEF.
SOME DAY I WILL
REPAY YOU.
GOODBYE!

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, KIT WEST
PROVES THAT A LESSON IN
HAND IS WORTH TEN IN THE
BUSH-----

TRUTH *not* FANCY

but, kind

Corte Brought Horses to America

IN 1521, CORTEZ BROUGHT WITH HIM THE FIRST HORSES TO BE INTRODUCED INTO NORTH AMERICA. THEY WERE USED IN HIS SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST MONTEZUMA, THE AZTEC RULER OF MEXICO. LATER, THEY MIGRATED NORTH INTO TEXAS, MULTIPLYING IN LARGE NUMBERS, AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE WEST.



THE INDIANS, LATER, LEARNED TO RIDE AND ADAPTED THESE HORSES FOR THEIR USE.



THE WESTERN, PIEBALD HORSES ARE THE CROSS-BREDS OF THESE ANIMALS.

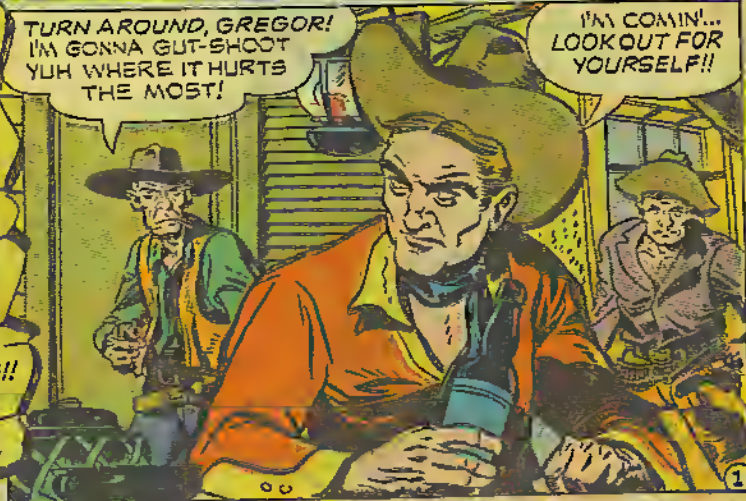




TWO MEN BLOCKED "KENO" RAWSON'S CLIMB TO ABSOLUTE POWER OVER APACHE CITY! JIM STONE, FIERY EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF THE "CLARION..." JOURNALISTIC RALLYING SYMBOL FOR THE TOWN'S DECENT ELEMENT... AND TEX GREGOR, WHO BACKED STONE'S EVERY BLAST AGAINST THE RAWSON MOB WITH HIS MOCKING, CHALLENGING GRIN AND HIS DEADLY GUNS! RAWSON HAD TO SILENCE THE "CLARION'S" VOICE AND THE SINGING GUNS... OR KNUCKLE DOWN!! IT WAS RAWSON'S CHOICE!! HE COULD CALL THE TUNE... OR DANCE TO TEX GREGOR'S OWN...

TURN AROUND, GREGOR! I'M GONNA GUT-SHOOT YUH WHERE IT HURTS THE MOST!

I'M COMIN'... LOOK OUT FOR YOURSELF!!



SIX SHOOTER SIRENADE



YOU'VE BEEN ASKIN' FOR THIS A LONG TIME!

CRASH



SURE LOOKS LIKE KENO RAWSON IS GONNA BE SHORT TWO GUNSELS...YOU OKAY, TEX?

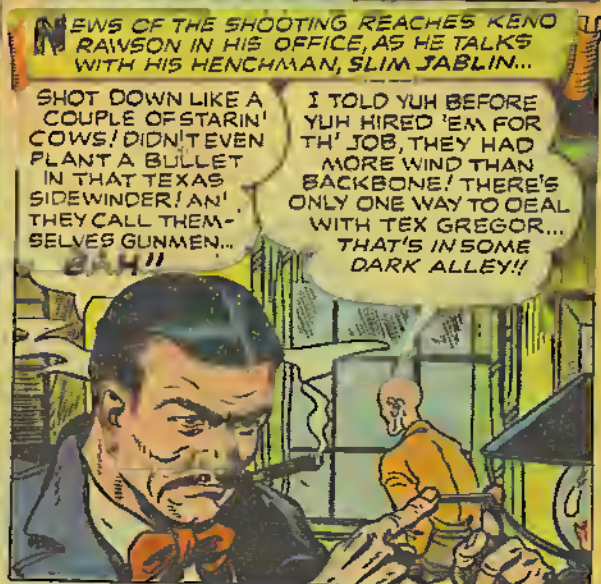
SURE! NOT A SCRATCH!



THAT'S NO JOKE! THIS ONE'S DEAD.. AN' IT SHORE LOOKS LIKE THIS ONE AIN'T GONNA BE AROUND LONG!

MAYBE THIS FINISHES RAWSON!

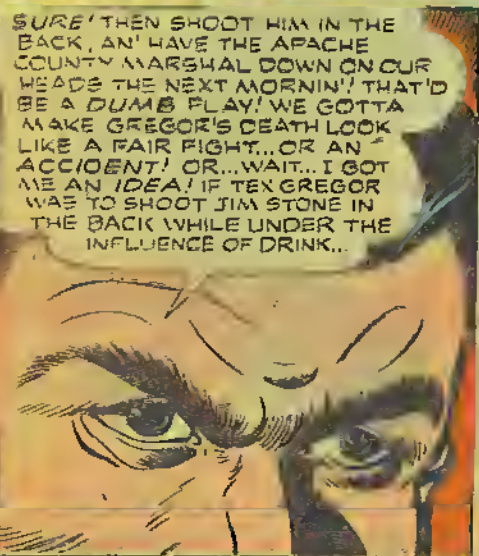
I DOUBT IT, JIM...HE'S GOT TOO MUCH TO LOSE TO QUIT NOW! I FIGGER THIS SHOOTIN' IS JUST GONNA START RAWSON FIGHTIN'!



NEWS OF THE SHOOTING REACHES KENO RAWSON IN HIS OFFICE, AS HE TALKS WITH HIS HENCHMAN, SLIM JABLON...

SHOT DOWN LIKE A COUPLE OF STARIN' COWS! DIDN'T EVEN PLANT A BULLET IN THAT TEXAS SIDEWINDER! AN' THEY CALL THEMSELVES GUNMEN...

I TOLD YUH BEFORE YUH HIRED 'EM FOR TH' JOB, THEY HAD MORE WIND THAN BACKBONE! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH TEX GREGOR... THAT'S IN SOME DARK ALLEY!!



SURE! THEN SHOOT HIM IN THE BACK, AN' HAVE THE APACHE COUNTY MARSHAL DOWN ON OUR HEADS THE NEXT MORNIN'! THAT'D BE A DUMB PLAY! WE GOTTA MAKE GREGOR'S DEATH LOOK LIKE A FAIR FIGHT...OR AN ACCIDENT! OR...WAIT...I GOT ME AN IDEA! IF TEX GREGOR WAS TO SHOOT JIM STONE IN THE BACK WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRINK...



...IT WOULDN'T BE HARD FOR US TO WHIP UP A LYNCHIN' MOB AGAINST HIM BEFORE MARSHAL PETERS COLLECTS TOWN!

AN' BY THEN IT'D BE TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT---AN' BOTH OF THEM RANNY'S WOULD BE OUTTA TH' WAY! YUH REALLY GOT SOMETHIN' THERE, KENO!

HOW'RE
YUH
GONNA
SWING
IT?

HALF THE TOWN, INCLUDIN'
GREGOR AND STONE'S
ATTENDING THE SLOAN'S
GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY
JAMBOREE TOMORROW
NIGHT! JED BAILEY, THE
BARTENDER THERE OWES
ME A COUPLE OF FAVORS!
I'LL HAVE HIM SLIP
SOMETHING IN
GREGOR'S DRINK!



NEXT NIGHT,
AS JIM
STONE
PROPOSES
A TOAST...

DID YOU TAKE
CARE OF GREGOR'S
DRINK, JED?

YEP! HE'LL START
FEELIN' THE NEED
OF FRESH AIR IN
ABOUT A MINUTE
OR TWO AFTER
HE DOWNS IT!

BOTTOMS UP!
TO THE FINEST
FOLKS IN TOWN!



WELL, TEX... IT'S TIME
FOR ME TO HIT THE
ROAD! I'VE GOT TO
MAKE UP THE NEW
ISSUE OF... SAY, IS
THERE SOMETHING
THE MATTER?

FEEL DIZZY... AN'
MY INSIDES SEEM
TO BE... BURNIN'
UP... GUESS I
NEED AIR... GOTTA
GIT ME SOME AIR...



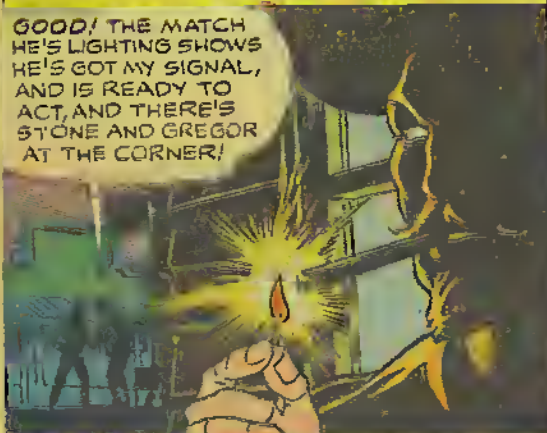
IT'S GOING JUST THE
WAY I PLANNED IT!
LET'S HAVE THAT GUN,
AND DON'T FORGET
TO WATCH THE BACK
OF THE ALLEY! I
DON'T WANT ANYONE
TO STUMBLE ON ME!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT
IT! JUDGE BENTON'S
ACROSS THE STREET!
WHEN YUH HIT THE
ALLEY, SIGNAL HIM...
HE'LL DO
HIS PART!

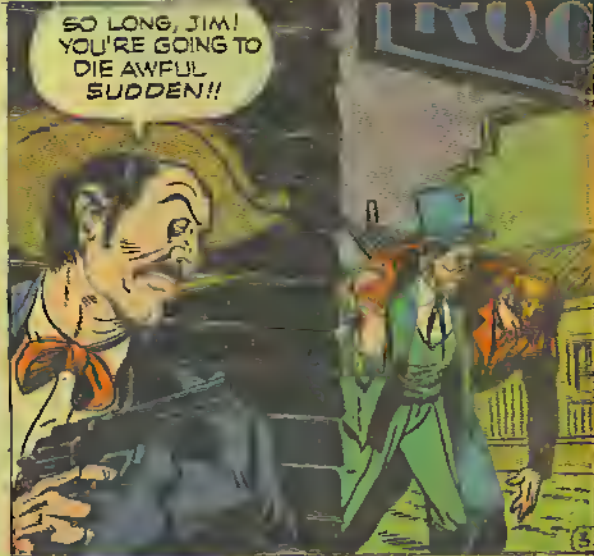


STEPPING INTO THE ALLEY ALONGSIDE
THE SLOAN HOTEL, KENO RAWSON
SPOTS JUDGE BENTON ACROSS THE
STREET... AND SIGNALS HIM THAT ALL
IS READY...

GOOD! THE MATCH
HE'S LIGHTING SHOWS
HE'S GOT MY SIGNAL,
AND IS READY TO
ACT, AND THERE'S
STONE AND GREGOR
AT THE CORNER!



SO LONG, JIM!
YOU'RE GOING TO
DIE AWFUL
SUDDEN!!





TEX! LOOKS LIKE...LIKE I FINALLY... GOT...GOT...

JIM...WHAT'S THE MATTER?



GET INSIDE FAST BENTON, AND SPREAD THE ALARM! I'LL SEE TO IT THAT THE GUN'S IN GREGOR'S HAND WHEN THE CROWD GETS HERE!



HOLD EVERYTHING! TEX GREGOR'S JUST KILLED JIM STONE IN THE ALLEY! I SAW 'IM DO IT!!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT! JIM WAS TEX'S BEST FRIEND!



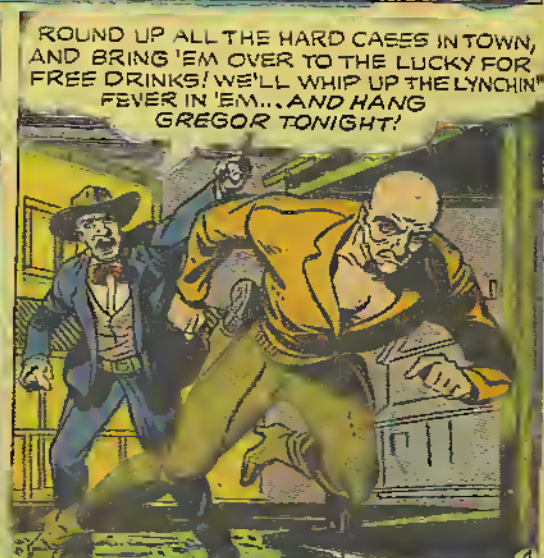
WHUT'S THIS FOOLISHNESS 'BOUT TEX KILLIN' JIM STONE!

TEX'S GOT LIQUOR ON HIS BREATH AN' THE GUN IN HIS HAND! SEEMS TO HAVE PASSED OUT! WE'D BETTER PUT HIM THE JAIL-HOUSE!



IT WORKED FINE! THERE GOES GREGOR T' JAIL!

YES... BUT WE'VE GOT TO FOLLOW UP BEFORE THE MARSHAL GETS HERE! NO JURY WOULD CONVICT TEX... WE GOTTA GET HIM TO BE LYNCHED BEFORE THERE'S AN INVESTIGATION!



ROUND UP ALL THE HARD CASES IN TOWN, AND BRING 'EM OVER TO THE LUCKY FOR FREE DRINKS! WE'LL WHIP UP THE LYNCHIN' FEVER IN 'EM... AND HANG GREGOR TONIGHT!

JAIL

ALL THAT EVENING, APACHE CITY'S TOUGHER ELEMENT DRIFTED INTO KENO RAWSON'S LUCKY-BREAK SALOON...

QUIET! YOU ALL KNOW WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER THIS EVENIN'! TEX GREGOR SHOT JIM STONE IN THE BACK!! NOW RAWSON WANTS TO SAY A FEW WORDS TO YOU ABOUT IT!



IT DON'T TAKE MUCH GUESSIN' TO KNOW WHO I'M GONNA TALK ABOUT! TEX GREGOR'S BEIN' HELD IN JAIL TILL MARSHAL PETERS GETS TO TOWN FOR THE INQUEST! THEN HE'LL BE TURNED LOOSE! ARE WE GONNA LET A MURDERER FREE IN THIS TOWN?

**NO... NO!
LET'S GIT
'IM OUTTA
THERE AN!
LYNCH 'IM!!**



THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO HEAR! LET'S GO GET GREGOR CUTTA JAIL!

I'LL GIT THE ROPE!

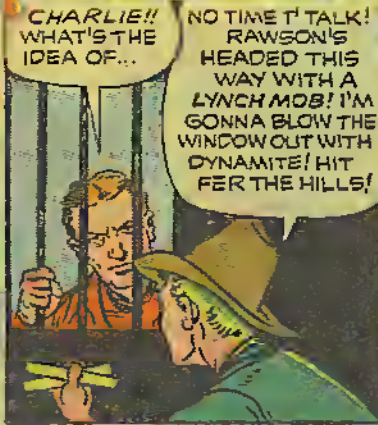
I GOTTA GIT TEX OUT OF THIS MESS... QUICK!



SLIPPING UNNOTICED FROM THE LUCKY-BREAK SALOON, CHARLIE HORN ARRIVES AT THE JAIL WHERE TEX IS HELD PRISONER...

**CHARLIE!!
WHAT'S THE
IDEA OF...**

**NO TIME T' TALK!
RAWSON'S
HEADED THIS
WAY WITH A
LYNCH MOB! I'M
GONNA BLOW THE
WINDOW OUT WITH
DYNAMITE! HIT
FER THE HILLS!**



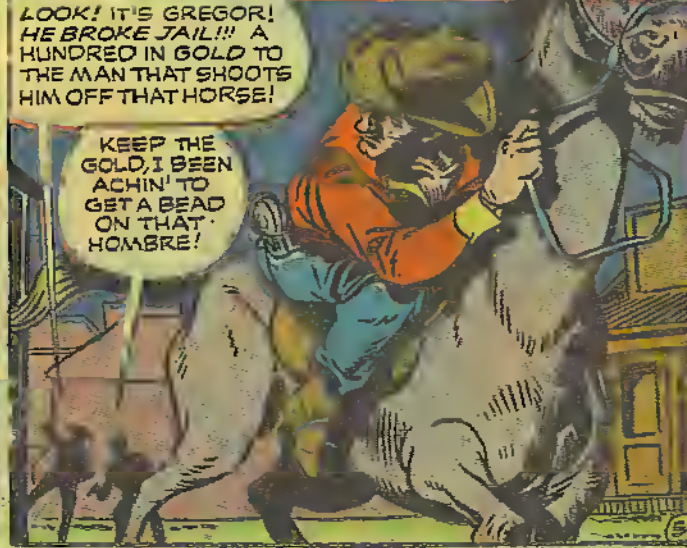
I WON'T FORGET THIS, CHARLIE!

HIT THE TRAIL! THERE'S A HORSE, GUNS, AND GRUB IN THE ALLEY! THE WHOLE TOWN'S COMIN'! I'LL CONTACT YOU LATER... SOMEHOW!



LOOK! IT'S GREGOR! HE BROKE JAIL!! A HUNDRED IN GOLD TO THE MAN THAT SHOTS HIM OFF THAT HORSE!

KEEP THE GOLD, I BEEN ACHIN' TO GET A BEAD ON THAT HOMBRE!



GOT HIM!!

YEAH... BUT HE'S STILL HANGIN' TO HIS HORSE! ROUND UP YORE HORSES, MEN, AN' GIT AFTER 'IM! HE AIN'T GOIN' FAR WITH A BULLET IN 'IM!

OLAM!

BUT BADLY WOUNDED AS HE WAS... **TEX GREGOR IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR RAWSON'S PURSUING WOLVES...**

QUIET, BOY... DON'T LET OUT A WHINNY TILL THEM SKUNKS IS PAST!... I'M HURT, FELLER... HURT BAD! YUH GOTTA GET ME TO THET CANYON CHARLIE AND ME FOUND LAST FALL...

HOURS LATER, TEX GREGOR'S HORSE ENTERS THE HIDDEN CANYON, WHERE HIS EXHAUSTED AND BADLY WOUNDED MASTER BLACKS OUT...

...WHERE, LATE THE NEXT MORNING... CHARLIE HORN FINDS HIM...

HE'S HURT BAD AND BURNIN' UP WITH FEVER! I GOTTA DRESS HIS WOUND AND GET NOURISHMENT INTO HIM... QUICK! IF I DON'T... HE'S SHORE NOT GONNA LIVE LONG!



WHILE TEX SLOWLY RECOVERS FROM HIS WOUND IN THE HIDDEN CANYON... APACHE CITY BECOMES A WIDE-OPEN TOWN...

ROBBERY BECOMES A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS... AND MURDER A DAILY OCCURRENCE...

GOOD NIGHT, JED... MY FAMILY'S EXPECTING ME HOME BEFORE MIDNIGHT!

HE'S HEADING OUR WAY... GIT READY!



A S TEX RECOVERS...HE BEGINS TO MAKE HIS PLANS...

I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY, TEX... WHAT'S YOUR PLANS?

GET THE PEOPLE TOGETHER WHO HATE RAWSON...AND WHAT HE STANDS FOR! TELL THEM TEX GREGOR'S ALIVE READY TO SMASH RAWSON'S MOB! HAVE THEM AT THE LIVERY STABLE NEXT FRIDAY... WITH MARSHAL PETERS!

NEXT FRIDAY...AT THE LIVERY STABLE...

I'VE AGREED TO LISTEN TO YOU, GREGOR...BUT AS U.S. MARSHAL, I STILL WANT YOU FOR MURDER! NOW WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY?

I'M GOING TO PROVE TO YOU THAT RAWSON AND NOT ME KILLED JIM STONE, MARSHAL PETERS!

MEN...I'VE GOT A PLAN TO SMASH RAWSON FOREVER! HE DOESN'T KNOW I'M AROUND THIS SECTION...AN' IF I WAS TO WALK IN ON HIM SUDDEN-LIKE...I FIGGER HE'D BE THROWN OFF BALANCE! WHEN I DO WALK IN ON HIM...THIS IS WHAT I WANT YOU FELLOWS TO DO...

A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT RAWSON'S OFFICE...

WELL, SLIM, WE'RE SITTING PRETTY! JIM STONE'S DEAD...TEX ON THE LAM...OR DEAD! WE'RE THE KING-PINS OF APACHE CITY!

YOU'RE ALL WRONG, DAWSON...I'M RIGHT HERE BEHIND YOU!

WHAT?

WHY, YOU...

DON'T GET EXCITED, SLIM... TEX AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERES! THERE'S A DOZEN OF OUR MEN WITHIN EARSHOT TO GUARANTEE THAT! YOU HERE FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL, TEX?

YEAH...STONE'S MURDERER... DEAD OR ALIVE!

YUH HEAR THAT, SLIM? GUESS IT'S ME TEX WANT'S TO KILL...CAUSE I'M THE HOMBRE THAT KILLED STONE AN' FRAMED TEX FER TH' JOB! NOW THAT YOU KNOW, TEX...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

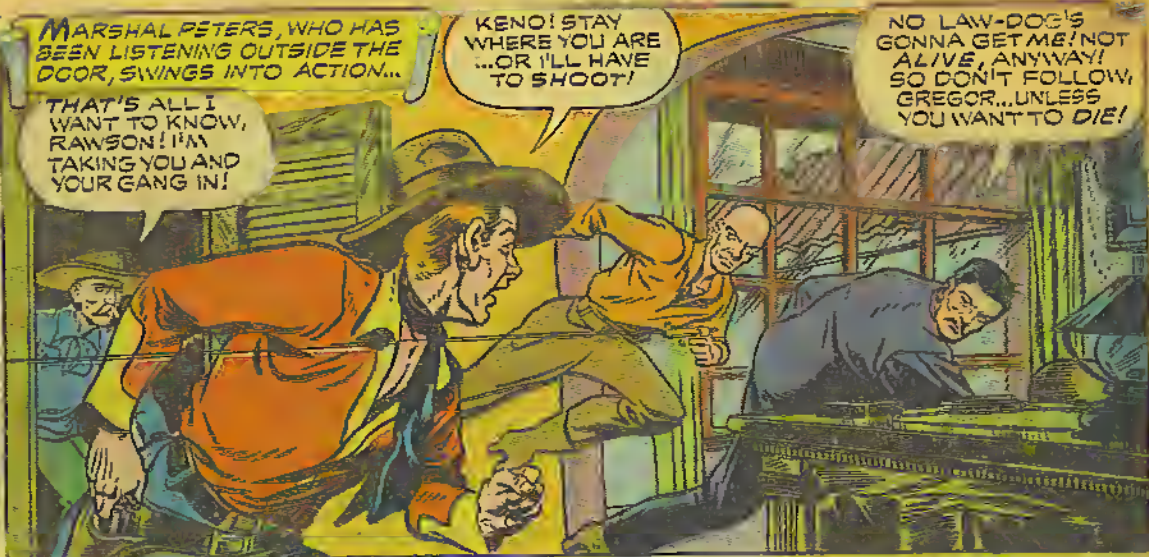
ARREST YOU FOR MURDER, KENO! I'M A SWORN DEPUTY FOR THE U.S. MARSHAL!

MARSHAL PETERS, WHO HAS BEEN LISTENING OUTSIDE THE DOOR, SWINGS INTO ACTION...

THAT'S ALL I WANT TO KNOW, RAWSON! I'M TAKING YOU AND YOUR GANG IN!

KENO! STAY WHERE YOU ARE...OR I'LL HAVE TO SHOOT!

NO LAW-DOG'S GONNA GET ME! NOT ALIVE, ANYWAY! SO DON'T FOLLOW, GREGOR...UNLESS YOU WANT TO DIE!



YOU'RE NOT GOING NOWHERES!!! THROW YORE GUNS DOWN... OR GET SHOT TO PIECES!

NOTHING DOING! WE'LL MAKE A FIGHT FOR IT... **UH!**

BANG!

AM!

BANG!

CRASH!

BLAM!



I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS CHANCE TO PAY YOU OFF FOR JIM, KENO! SO HERE IT COMES!

I'M GOING TO KILL YUH, TEX! IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, I... OHH...

WITH KENO RAWSON'S DEATH, THE REST OF HIS MOB OFFERED ONLY FEEBLE RESISTANCE...THEY SURRENDERED...

NOW GET THIS! EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU OUTLAWS ARE GOING TO PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES IN APACHE CITY!



GOLD MAKES A GHOST TOWN!

I INTEND TO RUN THIS TOWN, PLANTER...AND YOU'RE IN MY WAY!!

THE
DICTATOR OF
RANGE CITY!
THAT'S WHAT THEY
CALLED CRAFTY
RED BUSHER! NO
ACT OF VIOLENCE WAS
TOO GRIM FOR HIS
WARPED, CONNING
MIND! IT TOOK A
FOUR LETTER WORD
SPELLED G-O-L-D
TO STOP HIM AND
THE RESULTS WERE
GILDED IN THE
PAGES OF
HISTORY!

MIGHT AS
WELL STOP HERE
AN' RUSTLE UP
SOME GRUB! START
A FIRE, JACK... I'LL
UNPACK THE
VITTLES!

TWO TRAVELERS
RIDE INTO THE
DUSTY REMAINS OF
RANGE CITY...

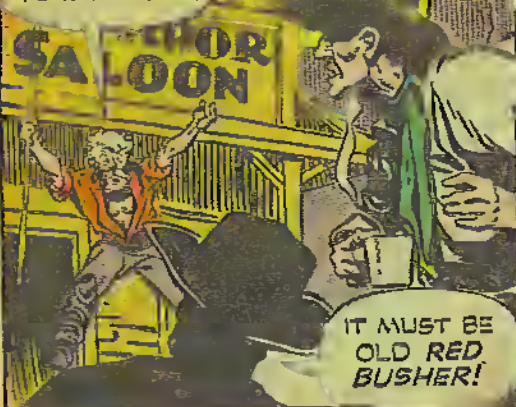
BRRR! I
GET A CREEPY
FEELIN' THINKIN'
OF HAVIN' LUNCH
ON THE MAIN
STREET OF A
GHOST TOWN!

HOTEL

LETTERING BY
HOWARD FERGUSON

THEY'VE
COME BACK!
HA!! I KNEW
THEY'D RETURN
TO MY TOWN!!

HOLY SAGEBRUSH!!
STEVE...WHO
IS HE?



IT MUST BE
OLD RED
BUSHER!

TAKE IT EASY,
OLD MAN...NO ONE'D
COME HERE TO THIS
GHOST TOWN EXCEPT
TO PASS THROUGH!

NO...NO! THEY'VE
GOT TO COME
BACK...MUST COME
BACK...



WOW!! CRAZY AS A
COOT! WHAT'S HE DOIN'
HERE IN THIS DEAD BURG
ALL ALONE?

BEIN' NEW
'ROUND HERE, YOU
WOULDN'T KNOW! SIT
DOWN...I'LL TELL YOU
ALL 'BOUT IT WHILE
WE CHOW UP!



FORTY YEARS
AGO RANGE CITY
USED TO BE QUITE
A TOWN...JEST
BUSTLIN' WITH
PROSPERITY AND
NOT A LAW
ENFORCING AGENT
WITHIN THIRTY
MILES! SEEMS
THAT RED BUSHER
KNEW THIS MORE
THAN ANY ONE
MAN...AN' LIKE
DRIFTIN' TUMBLE-
WEED, HE RODE
INTO RANGE CITY
BOILIN' OVER
WITH TH' WRONG
KIND OF IDEAS...

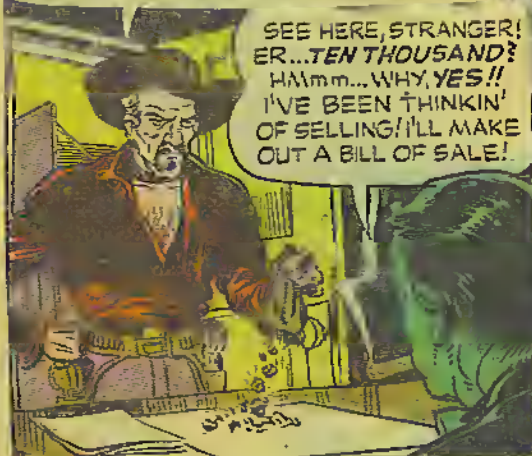
TH' FIRST PLACE RED HEADED
FOR WAS NICK FORRER'S SILVER
MIRROR SALOON...

THERE SHE IS, RED...
YOUR NEW HEAD-
QUARTERS! HAH! THIS
TOWN'S GONNA BE DOIN'
A LOT OF JUMPIN' TO THE
TUNE OF MY GUNS!



FORRER! I'M BUYIN' TH' SILVER
MIRROR!! THERE'S TEN THOUSAND
DOLLARS IN GOLD NUGGETS HERE!!

SEE HERE, STRANGER!
ER...TEN THOUSAND?
HMMM...WHY, YES!!
I'VE BEEN 'THINKIN'
OF SELLING! I'LL MAKE
OUT A BILL OF SALE!



...FORRER SIGNED HIS DEATH WARRANT WHEN
HE HANDED RED THAT BILL OF SALE...FOR
AS HE STARTED TO RAKE IN THE GOLD...

HANDS OFF THAT
GOLD, SUCKER! YOU AN'
ME ARE GOIN' FOR A
JAUNT IN THE DESERT..
GIT GOIN'!!

WHY,
YOU...



HA! NO ONE SAW US
LEAVE TOWN! I'LL JUST
SAY YOU LEFT FER TH'
EAST AFTER YOU SOLD
ME YOUR PLACE! HA!

NO...
AGH!

"...NO ONE MISSED FORRER...AND IT WAS JUST A
MATTER OF DAYS AN' RED BRUSHER HAD EVERY
GUN-HOLSTERED DESPERADO IN RANGE CITY,
PERKIN' WITH ENTHUSIASM OVER THE PLANS
RED OUTLINED..."

"MEN! I'M GONNA MAKE YOU ALL RICH IF Y' STICK
WITH ME! I'M BRINGIN' IN DANCIN' GIRLS FROM
THE EAST...GAMBLING EQUIPMENT...CARDS...
DICE...ROULETTE WHEELS...AN' THAT AIN'T
ALL! I'M TAKIN' OVER EVERY BUSINESS IN
TOWN AND EVERY RANCH AROUND HERE'LL HAVE
T' PAY ME TO KEEP OPERATIN'!

WE'RE WITH YOU A
HUNDRED PERCENT, RED!
GIVE THE ORDERS!

"...IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE A RED-
HEADED RATTLESNAKE TOOK OVER
RANGE CITY..."

LOOK, CHIN... RED GETS
TWENTY PERCENT OF YER
DOUGH OR THESE PIG-TAILS
COME OFF!

I PLAY...
I PLAY!!!

S-SURE, RED...
I'LL TURN OVER
TWENTY PERCENT OF
THE RECEIPTS

**RANGE
HOTEL**

I-I
WON'T
PAY...
AGHHH!

FAIR
ENOUGH! I'LL
PUT SOME
ONE IN HERE
WHO WILL!

**GENERAL
STORE**

BLAM!

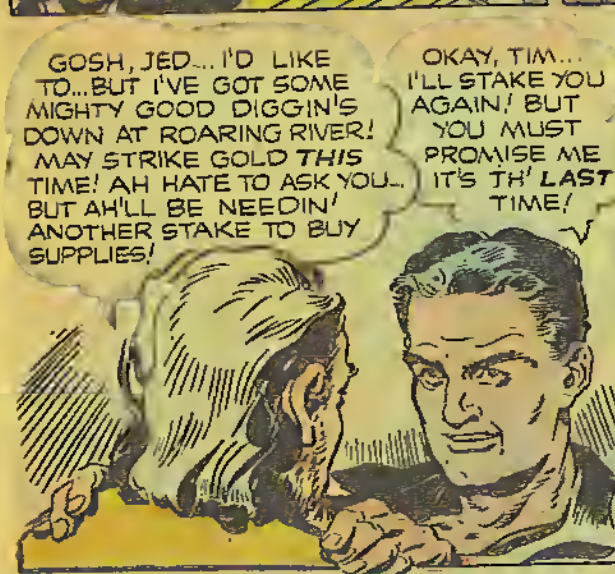
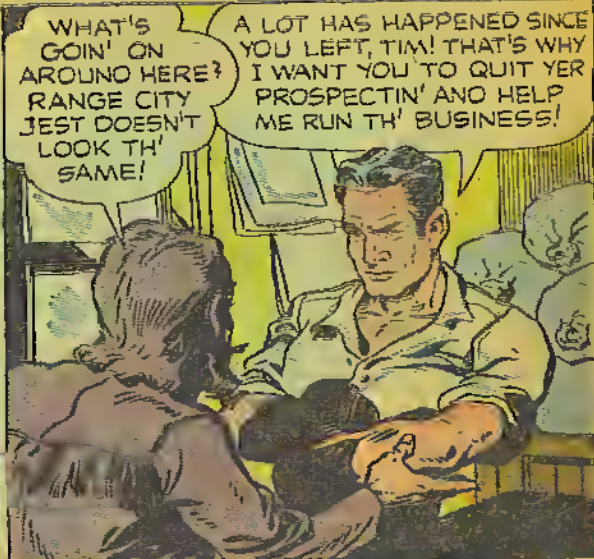
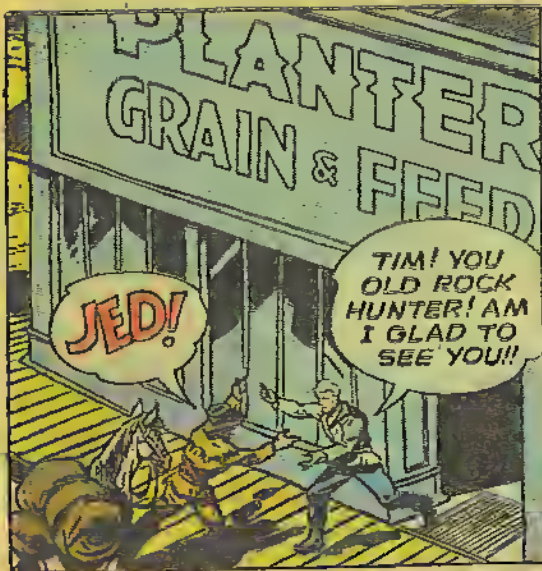
"...A FEW WEEKS
LATER, OLD TIM
PLANTER CAME
IN FROM DESERT
PROSPECTING...
HE SENSED
THE CHANGE
IN RANGE CITY..."


SOMETHIN' MIGHTY
FUNNY 'BOUT TH'
TOWN... DOESN'T SEEM
TH' SAME'S I LEFT
IT TWO
MONTHS
AGO!

**THE
SILVER
MIRROR**

DADUMIT! DANCIN'
GALS AN' GAMBLIN' AT
THE SILVER MIRROR!
AH'D BETTER GIT
OVER TO MAH BROTHER
JED'S PLACE RIGHT
QUICK AN' LEARN
WHAT'S GOIN' ON!








LOOK, RED... I WOULDN'T CARE IF IT WAS TWO MILLION!! I DON'T LIKE BEIN' PUSHED AROUND!! NOW CLEAR OUT... OR BE CARRIED OUT BY TH' MORTICIAN!!

OKAY, PLANTER! REMEMBER... YOU STARTED TH' GUN DRAWIN'!


...LATER...



WELL... SO RED BUSER'S GOIN' INTO THE FEED BUSINESS! I HEAR HE'S GOIN' TO UNDERCUT YOUR PRICES, JED... PUT YOU OUT OF BUSINESS!


HE'S WELCOME TO TH' TRY!

...Meanwhile...




IT'S COSTIN' YOU A LOT OF DOUGH TO GO INTO TH' FEED BUSINESS! LOOK AT THESE BILLS, RED!

HMMM! MAYBE PLANTER'S CHANGED HIS MIND! ROUND UP SOME OF THE BOYS AND BRING ME A KEROSENE LANTERN!




YOU GUYS STAY OUTSIDE UNTIL I CALL FOR YOU... I'M GOIN' IN ALONE!

WHAT'S HE GOIN' TO DO WITH TH' LIGHTED LANTERN?




PLANTER!! I'M CUTTIN' MY OFFER IN HALF! I'LL GIVE YOU ONE THOUSAND BUCKS FOR YOUR BUSINESS!!

YOU CRAZY FOOL! GET OUT OF HERE!

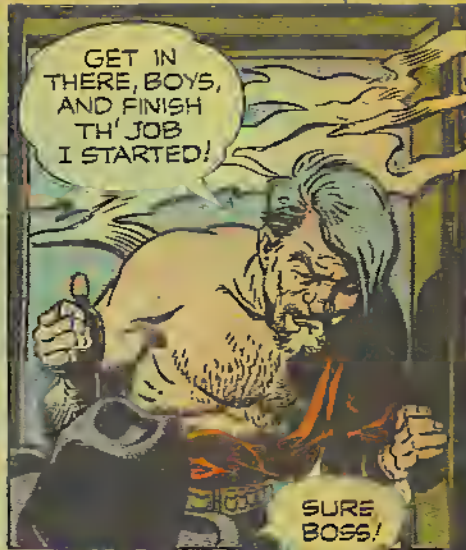


TOO BAD YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN...

WHY, YOU BLACK-HEARTED DEVIL!



I'LL BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR BODY FOR THAT!



GET IN
THERE, BOYS,
AND FINISH
TH' JOB
I STARTED!

SURE
BOSS!



NO ONE
STANDS IN THE
WAY OF RED
BUSER... HA!
LISTEN
TO HIM
SCREAM!



HE'S OUT
COLD! MAYBE
WE'D BETTER
GET HIM
OUTSIDE!

NO! LET
HIM FRY IN
THE FIRE!

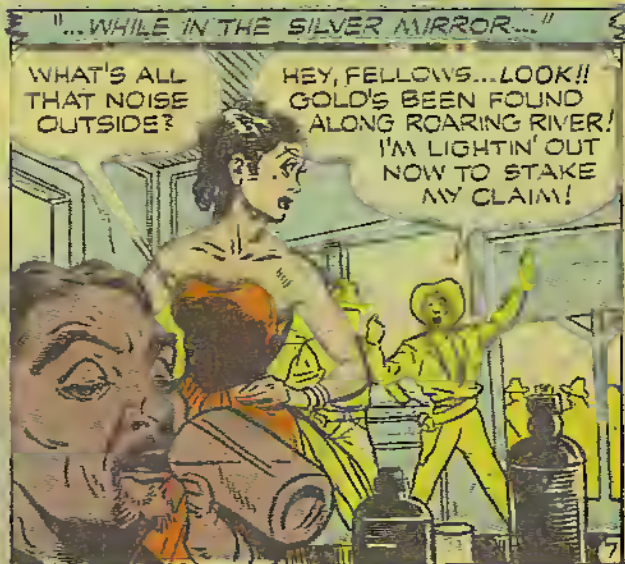
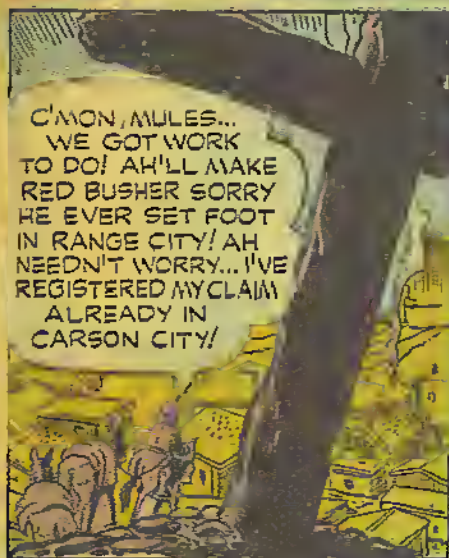
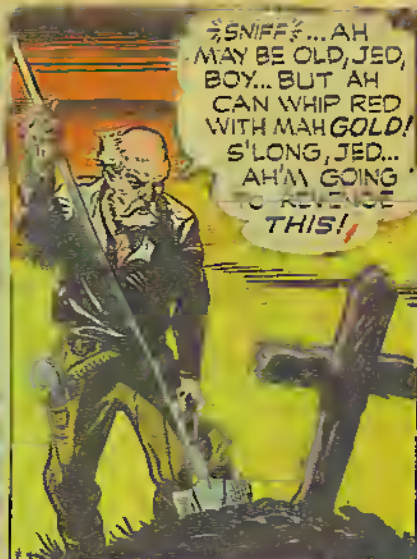
...WHILE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN
THE HAPPY HUMMING OF OLD TIM
PLANTER SUDDENLY BROKE INTO
A SHOUT OF HORROR...

A LUM-DE-DUM-DE...
WAIT'LL JED HEARS
ABOUT MY FIND... SAY...
THAT FIRE! IT'S
JED'S PLACE!



JED!
JED!!

TIM...
H-HELP
M-ME... IT
WAS RED...
BUSER...



COME BACK
HERE, Y' FOOLS!
HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN
MY PLANS?

SORRY, RED!
EVERYONE'S DESERTIN'
RANGE CITY!--NO
SENSE STICKIN' AROUND
HERE WHEN THERE'S
GOLD DOWNRIVER!

... a week later...

HUH! THERE
GOES TH' LAST OF
'EM ON THAT FOOL
GOLD HUNT! BUT
THEY'LL BE BACK...
ALL OF THEM WILL
BE BACK TO
MY TOWN!

... A MONTH
LATER...

WHY DON'T
THEY COME BACK?
THEY'VE GOT TO COME
BACK TO MY TOWN!
THEY'VE GOT TO
COME BACK! ...

... IF RED BUSER COULD HAVE SEEN THE
NEW TOWN SPRINGING UP ALONG ROARING
RIVER... HE'D HAVE HIS ANSWER!--THE
FABULOUS GOLD STRIKE TOUCHED OFF BY
OLD TIM WAS TOO MUCH OF A LURE FOR
ANYONE TO RETURN TO RANGE CITY...

WONDER HOW RED BUSER
FEELS NOW? HE'LL NEVER SHOW
UP HERE... NOT WITH A
FEDERAL MARSHALL AROUND!
AH TOLD YOU, JED, BOY...
AH'D EVEN THINGS UP!!

"... AND THUS ENDS THE STORY
OF HOW RANGE CITY BECAME
A GHOST TOWN..."

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE RED
BUSER WENT COMPLETELY LOCO,
AND HE'S BEEN WAITIN' FORTY
YEARS JUS' HOPIN' FER TH'
PEOPLE TO COME BACK
TO RANGE CITY!

RED
KILLED
HIMSELF!

GUESS WHAT
YOU TOLD HIM
CLICKED! DUNNO
WHETHER OR NOT
T' FEEL SORRY FOR
HIM... ALL THESE
YEARS... JUS'
WAITIN'!!

LET'S GO, JACK...
IF WE EXPECT TO
REACH GOLD TOWN
BY NIGHTFALL!

YEAH... THERE'S
SOMETHING
ABOUT THIS
PLACE THAT
GIVES ME TH'
CHILLS!

STEVE...
A SHOT!
CAME FROM
THE OLD
SALOON!

RED
BUSER?



The
NEW
AVON
Comic...
**SLAVE
GIRL
PRINCESS**

NOW AVAILABLE
AT ALL
NEWSSTANDS!

Don't
**MISS
IT!**

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